



Abstract

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PI Title:

Project Title: NAVAJO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES LIVING WITH FAS/FAE

Abstract: The aim of this study is to develop a culturally sensitive grounded theory of resilience in Navajo families who are caring for a child with FAS/FAE. The research question is: What are the social and cultural factors and processes that Navajo families and community use to facilitate resilience to manage care for a child with FAS/FAE? The most frequent and preventable cause of mental retardation is Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), (1). FAS is defined as the presence of central nervous system abnormalities which include mental retardation, growth retardation, and a pattern of facial abnormalities, (1). Fetal Alcohol Effects (FAE), is a related but different condition, (1). Resilience is a concept that has been used to describe Native Americans yet few studies have been done using resilience as a theoretical perspective. The resilience perspective is a focus of study (eg. protective factors as well as risk factors). "Native American families have powerful reservoirs for resilience," (2). This resilience may in part stem from the poverty, oppression, and exploitation experienced by Native Americans. Resilience is defined as "the ability to transform disaster into a growth experience and move forward," (3, p. 1). Many Navajo families manage the problems associated with living with FAS/FAE. FAS programs were started in Tuba City, Arizona on the Navajo nation to establish networks of support for women, children, and families dealing with alcohol use and its effects on the pregnant woman, child, and family, (4). Identifying what factors influence their abilities to manage, and stay in harmony, despite the impairments of FAS/FAE will provide information to healthcare providers to assist other families who may be struggling with similar problems. With increased incidence of FAS/FAE among Navajo children, it is important to determine how these families are managing, and determine what protective and risk factors may be present.

Thesaurus Terms:

Native American, child (0-11), culture, family structure /dynamics, fetal alcohol syndrome caregiver, child care, family nursing, psychological adaptation
behavioral /social science research tag, clinical research, human subject

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